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S O M E
A N E C D O T E S
O F T H E L A T E

P E T E R C O L L I N S O N ,

FELLOW of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and of the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES,
in LONDON,

And of the ROYAL SOCIETY of BERLIN and UPSAL.

By the late Dr. JOHN FOTHERGILL.

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

L O N D O N :
WROTE IN THE YEAR MDCCLXIX, AND FIRST PRINTED IN
MDCCLXXXV.

MUSEUM
BRITAN
NICHOL

TO THE READER.

SOON after the appearance of the two octavo volumes, part of Dr. Lettsom's edition of the late Dr. Fothergill's works, and wherein Dr. Lettsom, without the Editor's approbation, had surreptitiously introduced "the anonymous letter", printed with the original portrait in 1770,* entitled, "Some account of the late Peter Collinson, F. R. S. &c. in a letter to a friend"; the ensuing paragraph was inserted in the Gazetteer of the 17th of March, 1783.

"A publication having been introduced in Dr. Lettsom's edition of the late Dr. Fothergill's works, entitled "Some account of the late Peter Collinson, F. R. S. &c. in a letter to a friend;" you are empowered by a correspondent to assert, that Dr. Fothergill was not the sole author of that "letter;" but waving further notice at present of a deception uninteresting to the public, and of which the detail would prove too prolix for newspaper insertion, it is yet intended to particularize a relative instance of a similar complexion, more immediately striking, and which a very few words can elucidate. In 1758 Peter Collinson had his por-

* P. C. had his portrait taken at Bath in 1758; when Dr. F. sat for his, chronology seems to be silent.

trait taken at Bath by the immortal Gainborough ; from this performance an engraving was executed by the celebrated Mr. Miller, copies of which were struck off, and prefixed to the LETTER published in Dr. Elliot's edition of Dr. Fothergill's works, printed for Mr. Walker in Paternoster-row ; and as there is no picture of P. C. except Mr. Gainborough's, or other engraving from the Bath portrait but Mr. Miller's, neither of which were ever in Dr. Lett- som's possession, consequently the head produced by him in his frontispiece to the letter in question, as the resemblance of P. C. is spurious, imaginary, ideal, and totally destitute of all traces of the original."

And no apology being afterwards conveyed in the third and last volume of the said edition for so unfair and unprecedented an introduction, it was resolved, agreeably to an antecedent declaration to that effect, to print Dr. Fothergill's genuine original letter verbatim from the manuscript, and in consequence the following advertisement was published in the Gazetteer of the 12th of October, 1784:

" Preparing for the press, with occasional notes and an appendix, some anecdotes of the late Peter Collinson, F. R. S. &c. in " A letter to a Friend," by the late Dr. Fothergill,
verba-

verbatim from the original corrected manuscript in the editor's hands.

“The letter, under the above title, artfully imposed on Dr. Lettsom, and inserted in his edition of Dr. Fothergill's works, as solely the late Doctor's, is, together with the prefatory note, deceptive—the former being a mere transcript of that printed anonymously with Gainsborough's portrait in 1770;—and the latter not Dr. Fothergill's, as insinuated, but a recent composition introduced with the disingenuous view of giving a temporary sanction to a Letter, to which it was not originally prefixed.”

It may be necessary here to state, that certain letters have been interchanged between Dr. Lettsom, &c. and the editor, the contents of which would materially elucidate the primary and conspiring motives for this publication; a publication that if Dr. Lettsom, or rather his advisers had so pleased, might have been with the utmost facility prevented; to avoid prolixity, however, the epistolary correspondence is omitted; should another edition ever be deemed necessary, which will depend, not on the editor, but others, the letters shall certainly appear, together with some reserved anecdotes, and in that case, the edition will not be a private and confined, but a public one; a mode not at present adopt-

adopted, from deference to an amiable lady nearly allied to the late Dr. Fothergill.

The doctor's letter now claims the reader's attention ; the notes annexed to it are the editor's. The "Letter" that forms the appendix is the anonymous one before referred to (altered, no matter by whom, from the preceding genuine letter) and which through some fatality Dr. Lettsom has been induced to ascribe solely to Dr. Fothergill, and further to sanction that idea, has, in violation of his better judgment even suffered a prefatory note to be added as the late doctor's, which Dr. Lettsom must be conscious was neither of his composition, or originally prefixed to the said letter.

The "anonymous letter of 1770" has been also inserted by Dr. Elliot in his late edition of Dr. Fothergill's works, printed for Mr. Walker ; but who disdaining fervilely to sacrifice Truth at the shrine of false Idolatry, has with the candour, the liberality, and the sentiments^t of a gentleman, honourably and ingenuously given to Dr. Fothergill that degree of merit only to which he was ONLY and justly entitled

THE EDITOR.

To * * * *

I Know not, my dear friend, that I often wished for leisure and the talent of biography more than at present ; I could employ both of them in a manner that would be pleasing to myself, and enable me to hold out to the public an example worthy of being recorded, because deserving imitation. The satisfaction arising from the review of a life past in bestowing benefits, is not a small one; in placing the deceased again before us, we participate afresh in every social action of the friend we loved whilst living, and whose memory we honour when no more in our power ; to us
C like-

likewise it affords a most useful comment on those lines of Horace, so applicable to the loss I have lately sustained in the death of Peter Collinson.

Linguanda tellus est et domus et placens
 Uxor neque Harum quas colis arborum.
 Te proter invisum cupressum
 Ulla brevi dominum sequetur. †

Our acquaintance commenced about the year 1740, *He* was then considered as one of the ablest natural historians and botanists in England. *His* collection in most branches of natural history *were* very considerable, and the specimens well chosen; *his* botanic garden contained many curious plants, not to be met with at that time, in any other, and has been since much encreased; of *these affairs* I was then much less a judge than at present, I owe much of my acquaintance with these subjects to my deceased friend; scarce any thing gave *him* more pleasure than to create an inclination for such studies, so far as was consistent with the situation

† Whether the subject in review, and the idea conveyed by this curious quotation, has any, or no analogy, is submitted? The classic reader is at least gratified, and the doctor's intimacy with the ancients fixed on an adamantine basis.

of *his acquaintances*, being a man of business himself, *he* knew the value of time, and was cautious enough to avoid exciting a taste for such studies, when it was likely to be gratified at the expence of discretion, and of those hours which ought to be devoted to more necessary occupations.

It was a favourable circumstance to himself, that he was in partnership with *his* only brother ‡ in a business that did not always require their presence together; they lived in great harmony, were extremely diligent and successful †; they had each their amusement, which they followed as amusements, not as the chief pursuit of their lives; they found means of allowing each other time sufficient for their respective pursuits; both however had a strong relish for horticulture and planting. Their acquaintance was nume-

‡ Mr. James Collinson, a man of exemplary integrity, complacency, and benevolence; one never seduced by the tinsel blandishments of vanity and ostentation, to swerve from his professional principles; his mental qualifications were amiable and many; his taste and judgment in horticulture, admired, natural, and extensive; who without the little ambition of a wish to eternize so valuable a memory; without ever receiving any labored panegyrics on virtues, not ideal, but which he really possessed; fulfilled the relative stations of husband, father, and friend, in a manner that did the fullest honour to his own feeling, affectionate heart, and to humanity.

† An egregious mistake.

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rous, and among people of condition. Having been attentive to nature and the beauties it exhibits, they had mutually established a just conception of rural elegance, and promoted most successfully among their acquaintance, many of them of the first class, in point of fortune and capacity, the like sentiments, and aided them with their advice in carrying many noble improvements into execution; the two brothers may justly be considered as the parents of the most reasonable plan of horticulture, and the most useful vegetable ornaments that *was* ever introduced into this nation, and they had the satisfaction of enjoying under the pleasing shades that had been raised under their direction, the grateful acknowledgments of the possessors.

The late Sir Charles Wager, from *his* early appearance on *that stage* on which *he* afterwards did so much service to *his* country, to *his* last moments *kept up* an intimate friendship with *his* family, to *him* the public *was* in some respects indebted for the benefits *they* reap from my deceased friend's endeavours.——Sir Charles *made him* acquainted with many of the nobility whom *he* perceived had any *relish for these affairs*; and by their means *he* became known to, and esteemed by most of the great cultivators of planting
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in Great Britain *. Insects and their several metamorphoses employed many of those hours which at *his* time of life were spent in very different pursuits. Botany had its charms ; till *he* had a garden, and leisure to cultivate it, dried specimens were *his* amusement ; *he* collected them with care, *he* had free access to the best gardens, and became acquainted with the first rate natural historians of the age, Dr. Durham, Woodward, Dale, and to name all in one, the great Sir Hans Sloane was *his* particular friend and patron. I saw that vast treasure, for the first time, in company with Sir Charles Wager, and my learned friend ; there *is* scarce any thing in this amazing collection, with whose history, *he was* unacquainted †. One of the few

* This very elaborate account of P. C's connection with the late Sir Charles Wager, is entitled to the reader's closest attention. The changes so delightfully rung on the "he's" and "him's," beautiful as they may appear, must yet yield to something still nearer to perfection, to that exquisite elegance of phraseology so conspicuously predominant throughout the whole ; it is nevertheless expected the "he's" and "him's" will receive their full consequence in the after pages of this much-to-be-admired Letter ; a Letter, which though confessedly unembellished by the pompous and majestic language of history, is, however, notoriously rich in a wonderfully curious and select diction of its own peculiarly appropriate to this particular species of biography, and comprehending, unadulterate, all the easy and spontaneous graces of quotidian conversation.

† An assertion unfounded.

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that visited Sir Hans at all hours, and to the latest moments of *his* life, was Peter Collinson ; with such an attachment, such assistance, and with such examples, it cannot be wondered at, *that he* arrived at as high a *pitch* of knowledge in natural history, as most of *his* cotemporaries. Yet nothing useful or entertaining, in any art or science, escaped *him* ; *he* minuted every thing of this sort, that *cast up* † in reading or conversation, and communicated the remarks *he* made to those whom *he* thought most likely to render them useful to mankind.

He was very early chosen a fellow of the Royal Society, and continued a very useful and respectable member, to *his* last moments, many valuable remarks *he* furnished from *his* own fund, and instigated many others, in divers parts of the world, to contribute largely to the Transactions of this Society ; his diligence in maintaining an extensive correspondence, was incredible ; yet *he* never appeared to be in a hurry, for *he* lost no time ; *he* lived many years in great domestic happiness, *his* family took the bias, and aided

† There is a degree of intellectual refinement, couched in this very delicate and fortunate conception, that cannot fail of fascinating the nicest imagination.

his pursuits, like *his* own, it was their pleasure to be accustomed to the conversation of men learned in such enquiries : an attachment to like studies became fixed and habitual. *He* often observed, *he* thought it a matter of great consequence to young people of fortune, especially, that they should early be initiated, if possible, into a taste for such *kinds* of rural amusements as at once contributed to their pleasures by finding employ ; to their health, by that *kind* of exercise that planting, and such *kind* of employments requires, secures them from falling into idle dissipation or vice, through want of having *something to do*, which is the unhappy case of multitudes, who are idle and corrupt, because those who have been *about* them early, had not the inclination or address to engage them in some useful, pleasurable, innocent pursuit. Planting, *he* used to say, and gardening, supply a fund of entertainment, the most constant and reasonable of any other, and not to be purchased at any rate ; the trees we have planted *ourselves*, the plants we have introduced and raised, the fruits we have *ourselves* cultivated, supply a feast to the possessor, that no purchase can afford us. What a pleasing scene lies open to a young planter ; every succeeding year discloses beauties, discovers use, and brings most distant profit from early beginnings ;
by

by observing the rising groves, barrenness *itself* made fertile, and adorned, our country improved, our lives made useful, our posterity enriched, all at the same time. I seldom knew a man, would *he* say, who had a just taste in these useful refinements, who was not, at the same time, virtuous, and truly honourable; and indeed *he* had a right to say so, for *he* had the happiness to reckon amongst *his* intimate friends, men in all stations, of the most unblemished characters, of the most amiable ones of all parties and distinctions †.

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† P. C.'s acquaintance was certainly extensive; he had the good fortune to be known to many exalted and illustrious characters; and beside the personages specified in this, and in the "Anonymous Letter" P. C. was honoured by the favour of the earl of Bute, the great patron of science, the first and most successful of ministers, under whose short, but auspicious administration, Britain was every where triumphant; her colours flying in every quarter of the globe; an honourable and adequate peace at length terminated the vast, the imperial scene of glory.

With their graces the dukes of Richmond and Northumberland, and with that great "luminary of the law" the earl of Mansfield, P. C. lived in habits of sincere and reciprocal regard.

Her grace the duchess dowager of Portland even numbered him among her select intimates, a distinction indeed! Whilst to crown the noble list, the earl of Clarendon's name remains to be added, and no one more condescending in his esteem for P. C. than his lordship; a nobleman far less distinguished by elevated
rank

In person, *he* was rather short than tall, well made, and had a pleasingly, social aspect, *his* conversation was chearful, and usually entertaining, because it was generally turned to some useful disquisition, or imparting some beneficial information

rank, than benignity of mind, unremitted friendship, and improved taste, evinced in various interesting and striking edifices, describing seats, ruins, temples and mausoleums, constructed with all the apposite and pleasing imagery of heathen mythology, and Attic and Roman elegance, picturesquely dispersed throughout the ample extent of the paradisiacal scenes of the GROVE, scenes, many of them richly meriting the animated and glowing touches of a De Louthembourg, or a Gainsborough.

Among the departed illustrious P. C. was socially connected with their graces the late dukes of Richmond and Portland, noblemen of intrinsic, but distinct worth, the one possessing all the splendid virtues of urbanity and munificence, the other, not less beloved and revered for the mild and amiable ones of domestic life.

With the late earl of Jersey, and Henry lord Holland, father of the right honourable Charles James Fox P. C. was also cordially united by all the ties of a long cemented, ardent, and mutual friendship, of which abundant proof, an estimable and honourable deposit, is in the hands of the writer.

In the humbler line of connection, P. C. was intimate with some characters of great celebrity, and enobled by private virtue; the doctors Watson, Allen, and Ducarel, are an instance of it. Men of superior professional and scientific endowments;---names that add dignity to friendship; Dr. Watson's early exertions on the subject of electricity acquired him the highest reputation at the time, and though the principles of etherial fire may have been since further established by the investigations and experiments of the ingenious in Europe, and elsewhere; yet the lustre of origination must for ever principally rest with Dr. Watson. Dr. Allen circumnavigated the globe with the late lord Anson, and

mation, this rendered *his* company much desired by all *his* acquaintance, and indeed every person studious of collecting or imparting useful general knowledge, almost was of *his* acquaintance. *He* often spent a few days with one or other of *his* great botanical friends, in the neighbourhood of London, collecting and imparting useful hints for the improvements they were carrying on; and indeed there

and soon after his return in 1744, was elected warden of Dulwich college, Fortune for once taking Merit by the hand; in a few years, he succeeded to the mastership; the functions of this situation, he discharged with equal credit to himself, and to the emolument of that laudable institution, the revenues of which, by dint of abilities co-operating with intense application he very importantly augmented; Dr. Allen has, for some time past retired, deeply regretted by those over whose interests he had so long and worthily presided, now enjoys in the completest sense "*Otium cum dignitate*," and lives as he has ever lived, the valuable, the beneficent friend of mankind.

Dr. Ducarel's consummate and recondite knowledge and skill as an antiquary are sufficiently known. Among other interesting and learned publications, his "*Anglo Norman Antiquities*," is a work of great erudition, and will always rank among the first ornaments of the FIRST library.

Of foreign literati united by personal amity or social correspondence with P. C. that illustrious naturalist, the still surviving Buffon claims precedence; and of those who have joined that aggregate mass which impartial Fate has decreed the great, the able, and the good, equally with the base, the worthless, and the wicked, should form their respective portions of,---forbid it Science!---forbid it Genius and Virtue! that such names as Gronovius, Gmelin, Trew, Ehret and Solander, should be consigned uncommemorated to the shades of oblivion.

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were few persons so able as himself, in these respects, as *he* had the opportunity of long and extensive observation of the effects of different methods of cultivation, of what soil, what aspect, suited different plants and trees, and from this knowledge was oft enabled to rectify and prevent great mistakes, which, young planters, misled, perhaps by the ignorant and designing, were sometimes in hazard of falling into. *He* has left very few persons behind *him*, who were better judges, or more prudent advisers, in undertakings of this kind, as there are few who have seen so much as *he* saw, in these respects, had a clearer judgment, and formed upon a greater variety of observations, or had more discretion and address, in prevailing upon *his* friends, to give up bad taste, and prejudice ill founded for propriety and elegance.

But *he* was not only employed in correcting the taste, and in forming the judgment of *his* friends, but also in furnishing them with the means of encreasing their pleasures. I believe *he* was one of the first who introduced the principal ornaments of our plantations, shrubberies, and gardens from North America ; at least, *he* was the great restorer of this commerce, to the mutual benefit of both countries ; there has scarce any thing been published relative to the natural history

history of any part of the globe, wide and extensive as the subject is, which *he* had not either read, or procured an abstract of it, *His* situation in life in the mercantile way, and *his* connections with all ranks of people, from the highest to the lowest, furnished *him* with the means of universal enquiry. *He* had correspondents in every European nation; in America, from Hudson's Bay to the southern limits of New Spain, from Siberia to Peking, and in various parts of Asia; all *his* correspondents were employed in furnishing *him* with the curious productions of nature, fruits, and seeds of all sorts, and such facts *has* tended to the useful history of mankind: In return for the favours *he* received, *he* remitted either useful or agreeable intelligence, from hence, the seeds and fruits of our own, or other different climates, natural curiosities, peculiar to this country, in short, whatever *his* learned friends desired, in this exchange of good offices, no man ever exceeded *him*; few had ever more intelligent correspondents, or succeeded better in *his* designs of enriching this country, with the produce of every other that could add to its ornament, or conveniency; perhaps it may safely be averred, that *he* was the means of introducing more curious and useful plants, than any one man of *his* time, and may justly be deemed, the great restorer of useful botany.

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His business in the mercantile way, was chiefly to America and the West Indies, to the former especially ; and *his* thorough acquaintance with the history of the first settlers of the provinces by the English, and their natural produce, so far as the early writers on *these matters*, have described, furnished *him* with the means of proper enquiries, which *he* never failed to make, when *he* met with an intelligent correspondent. This gained *him* the acquaintance of the most sensible Americans THAT CAME OVER HITHER †, and at the same time, excited in many places, a taste for botanical researches ; every thing of this nature, that has appeared from that quarter owes its rise to *his* encouragement. That eminent natural botanist John Bartram, may be said to have been created such by my friend's constant countenance, instruction, and assistance ‡. *He* first recommended the collecting of seeds, and assisted in disposing of them to the principal nobility and gentry, in this nation, fond of these

† “ That came over hither ; ” --- Is there a climax in the whole Iliad equal in wonderful sublimity to this ? The doctor has here fairly “ out-Homer'd “ Homer.”

‡ Honest John Bartram, in process of time, by proper industry, address, and management from this side the Atlantic, became as vindictive in the cause as the worst, and such is the turpitude and profligacy of human nature, even whilst in the actual receipt of a pension from the crown, which, through the royal bounty was continued to his death.

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curious productions, to the mutual benefit of the collector, and this nation in general. But it was not to this country only, that *he* confined *his* benevolence, *he* took much pains to inform the Americans, and to prompt them to pursue improvements, alike beneficial to themselves, and to their mother country. How often have I heard *him* urge the necessity of cultivating flax, hemp, wine, and other products. Urging the Virginians to bethink themselves in time of raising a more permanent staple, than a plant, whose use depends alone upon caprice and fashion, the last of which is daily declining ; vines, said *he*, will thrive well in your country, but imitate nature in their cultivation ; don't keep them close to the ground, as we are forced to do in these Northern parts of Europe, for the sake of a little more sun, and heat, of which you have too much, but suffer them to run up trees, and hide their fruit among the foliage, as in the warm parts of Europe. I wish they may follow the advice of one of their warmest well-wishers.

The public is in possession of many little essays, which were printed in the magazines, or other periodical works ; their object *is* always the information and benefit of mankind, to the utmost of the writer's ability †. Besides *his* fond-

† We presume, by this time, the intelligent reader is convinced P. C.'s abilities as a writer, were at least equal to his friend's ; the essays referred to, were
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fondness for natural history, *he* was much conversant in the antiquities of Great Britain ; some curious remains of this sort are in the possession of his son *---few persons were better acquainted than himself with the progress of arts and manufactures, or improvements of any kind. The ancient state and gradual improvements of this city, in particular, were oft the subjects of *his* conversation ; scarce any relative to its progressive advance, to its present state, having escaped *his* notice ;

He was chosen a Member of the Society of Antiquarians, at its first institution, and has supplied them with many curious anecdotes,—for wherever *he* was, nothing escaped *his* notice, or *his* memory, if it appeared likely to be useful in explaining antiquity, or informing posterity.—Why *he* was not elected one of the Curators of the British Museum, may perhaps continue a matter of wonder, *so* long as the Museum itself *subsists*. *He* was one of the founder's most ancient friends, an assistant in forming *his* collection, well acquainted with every subject it contained, † and had done

on the emigration of swallows, &c. and some other subjects of natural history; vide notes to the “ Anonymous Letter” in Dr. Elliot's edition.

* A few spear's heads, &c. supposed to be Roman, found in the Isle of Wight.

† P.C. and with very sufficient reason, was entirely of a different way of thinking, but the doctor, it seems, was better informed on the subject.

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more to promote the knowledge of natural history, than all the Curators PUT TOGETHER †, but never, to my knowledge, did the least hint of disgust from such an apparent neglect escape *him*; *he* had no greater ambition, than to make *his* knowledge subservient to the common good of

† “Put together”---Leaving the Curators still independent of each other, which we believe to be to the full as agreeable to those gentlemen as “putting them together”, we apprehend this assertion to be too peremptory, captious, and apocryphal to be admitted without proof; in fact, the assertion proceeded from a heart envious, jealous, petulant, and perturbed; from the poor doctor’s not having been, at the original institution, appointed one of the Curators, “hinc illæ lachrymæ”, here was the fatal, the dire, the mighty source; from this strange, this heinous neglect it was, that the doctor ever afterwards availed himself of all opportunities of reflecting on those gentlemen whose merit had been distinguished by that nomination;---at once sanguine, implacable, and persevering in his resentments, and proud of an importance derived from the fulsome adulation of a set of satellitical flatterers, ever attendant on his motions, and subservient to his absurdities, whims, and prejudices, his mind was wholly unsusceptible of the calm and benignant virtues of patience, resignation, and forgiveness. The omission too of the doctor’s name in the list of king’s physicians, on the accession of our august sovereign to the throne, was another grievance of the first magnitude, never to be atoned, never to be expiated, notwithstanding he could not plead ignorance of those legal impediments, which presented at once, an insuperable bar to his avarice and ambition; hence also originated that seditious vehemence of “Amor patriæ”, that asperity, that habitual and rooted irritability of temper against government, avowed predilection in behalf of transatlantic insurgency, for we must not now venture to term it rebellion,-- and unrelenting malevolence against an elevated and virtuous character.

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mankind ; this could not be denied *him*, whether in or out of the direction of that inestimable treasure.

He was of a temper, open and communicative, capable of feeling for distress, and ready to relieve and sympathize. *He* rose very early, and whilst in the country, was almost, *if possible*, in *his* garden, † not only watching the operations of nature, but *working with his hands*, which at once contributed to *his* health and *his* pleasure ; *he seldom* was *guilty*, or trespassed against the rules of temperance in *eating*,
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and

† The premisses here alluded to, were not P. C.'s ; it is nevertheless true, he uninterruptedly enjoyed the same as his own, together with (through filial indulgence for a series of years) a freehold estate of more than one hundred pounds a year, in the county of Middlesex, which, with the former, by the will of Michael Russell, Esq; of Ridgeway-house, in the parish of Hendon, whose youngest daughter, Mary, P. C. married, devolved, at her ever to be lamented demise in March, 1753, on the only surviving son of that marriage : This lady was a woman of unblemished manners, and faultless purity of life ; one whose loss to her family was irreparable : At the age of forty-nine years, with resignation, patience, and fortitude, she calmly and cheerfully quitted all terrestrials, and implicitly submitted herself to the behests of that WISDOM which cannot err ;---to the care of that GOODNESS which is unchangeable, and everlasting. The writer, who felt, with the keenest sensibility, the cruel, the inevitable stroke of fate!---A stroke indelibly impressed on his bosom, and which for ever deprived him of the tender attentions and endearments of the best of parents, and of friends, derives a transient gleam of comfort, even in so remote an opportunity of rendering this very imperfect justice to her cherished and revered memory.

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and *never* in *drinking*; † fond of fruit to an extreme, and of flowers, a perpetual admirer; *he* was seldom without them in *his* house, from the early snow drop, to the latest winter cyclamen; *he* would often relate, with pleasure, the astonishing advancement made in *his* time, in horticulture, gave instances of many plants, that, at their first introduction, would not bear our winters, without shelter, and now almost *bore* our hardest frosts; that foreigners stood *amazed* at the power of vegetation in this country, ‡ and the happy

The whole of the late Mr. Russell's extensive property, in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, are now in the possession of his lineal heir Metcalfe Russell, Esq; of Sproughton, near Ipswich, a gentleman, whose ample fortune weighs light in the balance, when placed in competition with the superior worth, and fortitude of his mind, and personal virtues. *

† Without entering into a critical inquisition, on so tender a concern, which is not of the last importance; we will, without further comment, venture to pronounce the doctor's remark and compliment on the occasion, to be so pertinently introduced, and so highly coloured, as to be paralleled only by the singular delicacy of an observation, not unworthy the epicurean spirit of a D'Arteneuf, or a Quin.

‡ For how long a space "Foreigners", continued to be absorbed, in such a marvellous planet-struck fit of profound "amazement", at the mighty effects of a torpid, miserable, languid vegetation in this hyemal polar region, Dr. F. has left us utterly in the dark.

* This truly valuable character paid the great debt to Nature, in the critical period between the printing off the second and third sheets of this Letter, by an apoplectic stroke, on the 15th of February, 1785, and in the 50th year of his age; conferring on the Writer, the most unequivocal proof of his affection and regard.

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temperature we enjoy, notwithstanding the unmerited murmurs of the unthinking and injudicious against a climate the most favourable of all others, to the real happiness of mankind. † The summer heats, when considerable, *he* bore with some uneasiness ; cold never affected *him*, nor took *him* from *his* garden ‡.

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† A sentiment narrow, partial, and unworthy a generous, enlarged, and liberal mind, too peremptory, dogmatical, and presumptuous to be assented to, by an informed, and enlightened reader ; the effect of ignorance, founded on prejudice and error, and which relates to a positive fact, that neither P. C. or his biographer were competent to decide on, as neither had ever visited the southern parts of Europe, and were consequently unqualified to judge of the superior genial comforts derived from the all-invigorating influence and powers of an all-glorious Sun, in a more indulgent climate.

‡ The doctor, here, in affecting to speak of that which he could have but an imperfect knowledge of, has inadvertently, if not deliberately advanced beyond the line of truth. It may not, however, in this place, be improper to state to the reader, a few anecdotes of a very dissimilar complexion ; hitherto, a fictitious, instead of a real character, has been artfully introduced, and dazzled, with a false lustre, the eyes of the public ; all that has been yet said of the late Dr. F. has consisted in nearly indiscriminate praise, in the most fulsome eulogy ; but fair and honest biography has a further claim ; and it is as much a duty to detect imposture, as it may prove easy to reverse the medal : A few specific instances, selected from others, which might be adduced, however insignificant, however unimportant in themselves, will at least, in some degree, help to develop the minutiae, and assist in unfolding the secret movements of a heart, capable of stooping to the lowest duplicity, in traits far more faithful and striking, than it can ever be in the power of volumes of general unfounded adulation to convey.

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Excepting some attacks of the gout, in general he enjoyed perfect health, and great equality of spirits, bearing those trials which are incident to man, with fortitude and resignation. In such a course, he arrived to the 75th year of
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In 1766, when P. C's situation rendered it convenient to him, to quit his residence in town, and retire to his son's, in the country, he left in Dr. F's hands, that fine collection of animals in spirits, which had, at the expence of considerable time and labour, been procured from South America, the Leeward Islands, &c. The doctor was to purchase them, on terms correspondent with their value, to be afterwards adjusted between them; and here, the matter, highly to P. C's surprise, rested till his demise, a period of two years, and for any notice the doctor would have further taken, might have rested till doomsday. Another period of many months more, were suffered to elapse, when P. C's executor perceiving the doctor still to continue invincibly dumb on the subject, judged it expedient himself, to be no longer so; in pursuance of which resolution, the doctor was called on, to discharge the obligation; this was consented to, and he very generously offered twenty guineas, for that which he knew his late friend estimated at more than double the sum; this offer was deemed inadequate, and declined, and a return of the valuables proposed; but on this ground, as on all others, that concerned his interest, the doctor was inaccessible---was inflexible; he neither chose to extend his offer, or relinquish so capital an ornament to his museum; the result was, having so many points of the law in his favour, "*possession*", the terms were finally acceded to, and Dr. F. had the gratification of enriching his collection with above one hundred rare and singular subjects, in natural history, seldom to be met with, and at less than half their value; but the doctor's generosity was uniform, the instance that follows is a proof of it: When this good man purchased his villa in Essex, he applied to P. C. to be furnished with a variety of plants, from the garden at Ridgeway House; the requisition was instantly, and cheerfully complied with

of his age, attended with fewer infirmities *as* most people of that age, when, at the Right Hon. Lord Petre's, he was seized with a total suppression of urine, which baffled every attempt to relieve it, proved fatal in a few days,
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with, and the writer esteemed himself happy in being immediately instrumental in the package and conveyance of the same to Upton. This cargo was soon followed by another, consisting of a fine variety of the most curious of the orchis tribe, collected with great care, some expence, and considerable trouble; but let it be remembered, when, in the course of a few years, the son of his benefactor solicited a slight return, the donation of a single root only of the long tubed *sarracena*, of which species the doctor was then in possession of more than sixty roots, perishing, through ill management, in an artificial bog. He found the walls of Upton impregnable, and their lord, so tenacious was he of his expiring property, immovably steed to every impression of gratitude, every sense of obligation for the reiterated favours he had received.

The mind that is naturally covetous and sordid, is found to be seldom satisfied with present and temporary emolument, or impeded by local gratification in its insatiable thirst after further acquisition; the same restless principle still pervades; the same petty grasping after more is still prevalent, and all those little arts, which has been hitherto but too successfully practised, are afresh exerted to accomplish some new scheme, the darling object of the immediate moment. And it will be seen Dr. F. had not yet done with his late friend, or rather his friend's son's property; for, when in the year 1769, the latter was prevailed on to dispose of the contents of his conservatory in a public way, the doctor, by special request, begged to be previously obliged by the selection of certain valuable articles he wished to be possessed of; a favour for which he meant to make full compensation: the doctor was gratified, his gardener visited the conservatory; and, by his master's direction, carried off a variety of
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and deprived *his* family, *his* friends, *his* country of a man, devoted to their interest, and advantage. In *his* Will were found a few lines importing, that “*he* hoped *he* should “ leave behind *him* a good name, which *he* valued more than

its most striking ornaments; a proceeding highly detrimental to the then ensuing sale, and to the general dissatisfaction of the intended purchasers at it. Had the doctor's gardener attended at the time of disposal, it would have been a liberal, and friendly act, and materially have assisted; but to this, an insuperable difficulty presented itself; had Dr. F. purchased in that mode, he was liable to be called on by Mr. Langford, as other gentlemen were, for payment before delivery, which would have blasted the doctor's machiavelian policy and machinations at once, whose sole aim and drift it was to procure delivery before payment, and which, by this manœuvre, was accomplished.

As the doctor was now but too sensible of the unfortunate state of his late friend's finances, it was imagined by some, that by so extraordinary a request as the above, he intended to avail himself of such a favourable opportunity of making at least a genteel, if not a generous acknowledgment, as well on this account, as on account of certain other considerations for which he remained a debtor to the family. Those, however, who entertained so strange a belief, knew but little of Dr. F. nothing was farther from his contemplation---from his heart;---not, “ultima Thule,” dashed by the turbulence of Deucaladonian surges, more remote from comfort,---from the halcyon breezes of the South! He had no object but to avail himself of the promised, the expected harvest, the golden, the inviting opportunity; the propitious, the swindling moment of artifice and plunder;---and the reader shall be told, it was not till full six years were elapsed, and then only in consequence of very particular application, that the doctor was at length awakened to some sense of retribution; and induced, very contrary to his inclinations, barely and simply to discharge a debt,
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“ than riches ; that *he* had endeavoured not to live use-
 “ lessly, and that all *his* days *he* constantly aimed to be a
 “ friend to mankind.”

What

it is ^{id}event he meant to evade, and had meanly protracted the satisfying for
 so long and shameful a period of time.

One additional evidence more of that undeviating principle, under the guidance of which this “ Illustrious Character” deigned uniformly and systematically to act, only remains for present animadversion, viz. On P. C’s decease, the doctor expressed his earnest desire, to the executor, to be favoured with “ something” to remember his friend by ; and was accordingly complimented with a scarce and expensive work, in two volumes in folio, full of beautiful engravings, entitled, “ Hesperides Norimbergenses,” new and elegantly bound on the occasion : the doctor accepted the gift, with his very best thanks, and that “ he must think of some way or other of acknowledging the obligation for so “ sumptuous a present.” Such was the doctor’s written language in return ; a language that cost him nothing, and meant just as much ; the end was achieved,---the volumes found a place in the library in Harpur-street, where, for many revolving suns, they silently rested, together with the doctor’s overflowing gratitude for “ so sumptuous a present ;” for though in the continual receipt of some thousand guineas a year, and, in that of the influenza, of the enormous one of upwards of seven ; yet, between the good of the cause, and certain other concurring expences, he had not a fixpence to devote to the honest and laudable purposes of either justice or munificence. That invaluable lady, however, Mrs. Ann Fothergill, whose character is established on a more permanent foundation than words merely fallacious and deceptive, has, with an amplitude of honour, and with virtues reflecting the first distinction on her sex, since her brother’s death, by the hands of a gentleman, of whose superior literary abilities the doctor had occasionally and successfully availed himself, rendered full restitution, and nobly fulfilled those duties which the contracted littleness and callous obduracy of the doctor’s heart rendered him wholly inadequate to.

What I am now, though feebly attempting, *he* often executed for *his* friends with success ; rescued their names from unmerited oblivion, and proposed their virtues as examples to succeeding ages. Dr. Stukely and many others have received this just tribute to their memory ; while those, who had been the objects of peculiar care, have covered the remembrance of their obligations in the grave, with their deceased benefactor. This, however, is not the case in the present instance ; *his* friends cannot soon forget a man, whose aim was to inform and do good ; and though I feel, while I write, that I have parted with a friend who valued my happiness as *his* own, † and know, that many of his surviving

to. If the reader should chance to be a stranger to the cause above referred to, which is nevertheless impossible, if he had the most distant acquaintance with Dr. F. he may be informed, it was that cause for which this plundered, exhausted, and devoted country is now labouring under an immense debt of accumulated millions ;---the nefarious---the unnatural CAUSE of INGRATITUDE and AMERICA ; in respect to which, such was the violence and infatuation of the doctor's conduct, that had he ever thought of adopting the golden Pythagorean principle, of adjusting each night the diurnal balance between good and evil, he would, on a retrospect, with difficulty have found even a single day wherein the latter did not powerfully preponderate,---the former kick the beam.

† Dr. F. had abundant reason to say so, for at a time when his situation required the warmest exertions of friendship ; when, on his arrival from the North, he had only an obscure apartment, as a lodger, in Grace-Church Street, P. C. was indefatigable in recommending the doctor to the notice of many opulent

viving acquaintance are as desirous as myself, and much more
 able † to do justice to *his* memory ; yet *his* distant friends
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opulent and respectable families ; and the affluence and importance he afterwards so fortunately acquired, must, in a great measure, be attributed to so early, so friendly, and so propitious an introduction.

† In this last very modest and sensible opinion of the doctor's, we believe every reader will most cordially coincide in sentiment with him.

✎ The few preceding particulars have been submitted with all possible fidelity ; they advert to facts which sycophantry will not easily do away, or sophistry elude ; more might have been introduced, equally, if not more cogent and decisive ; in all events, these will furnish some slight, but real sketches of a character hitherto but little understood, because hitherto artfully disguised under a specious, but illusive display of virtues, no where existing, but in the imagination of the Eulogist : If they are not decorated by the flowery delineations of a gay and exuberant fancy, incompatible with the subject, they have, at least, humbler pretensions ; they are the honest colourings of the homely pencil of Truth ; which it is hoped, will, with the candid and judicious, more than compensate for the absence of that energy of style and language which is always sure to command attention, and carry irresistible conviction to the reader. The doctor's original letter is now in his hands, the manuscript of which will be, for some time, left in Mr. Walker's hands, No. 44, in Paternoster-row, for the perusal and satisfaction of those who may be acquainted with the late Dr. Fothergill's hand writing, and may chuse to inspect the same.

If it should be enquired at whose expence the following " Anonymous Letter of 1770," was published ? The answer is ; previous to that publication, Dr. Fothergill proposed to the Editor, from whose immediate transcript the same was printed, equally to divide the **WHOLE** expence with him, including the engraving from Mr. Gainsborough's portrait, by the celebrated Mr. Miller, of Dorset Court ; striking off copies of the same to prefix to it, letter-press, &c.
 and

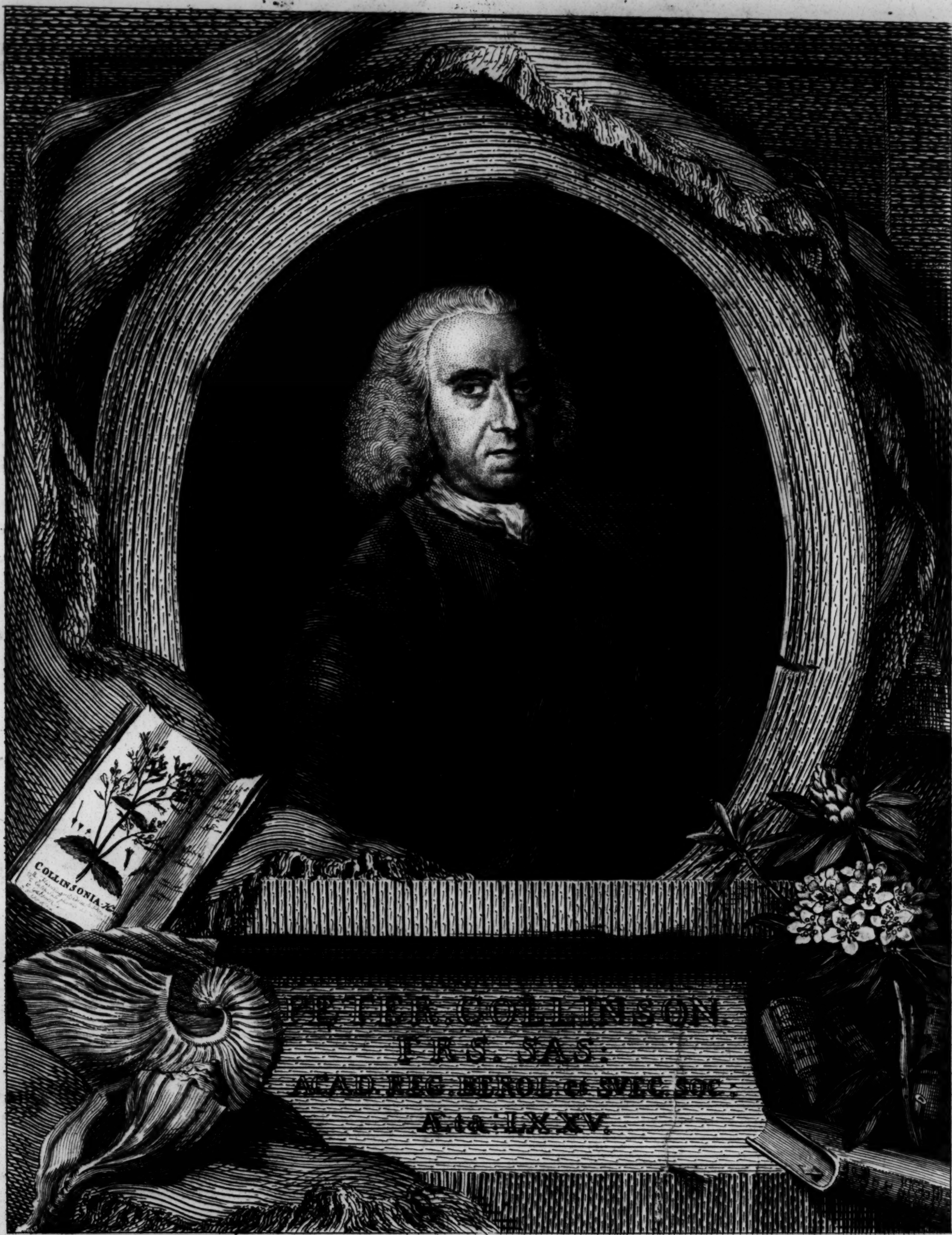
will, I know, be pleased, with even this detail of *his* conduct and conversation.

and that when the pamphlet, &c. should be completed, an equal proportion should be made of the number of copies designed to be printed off. The proposal was just and candid, and readily acceded to; and, in due time, the pamphlets were fairly divided; but it somehow happened, on the ultimate settlement of the business, the doctor had the address to shuffle off with a sum considerably less than the agreed on moiety, the proportion of expence, his own voluntary engagement, had in honor subjected him to the payment of; the balance, the reader need not be NOW told, he never offered, or was, indeed, ever required to pay, by

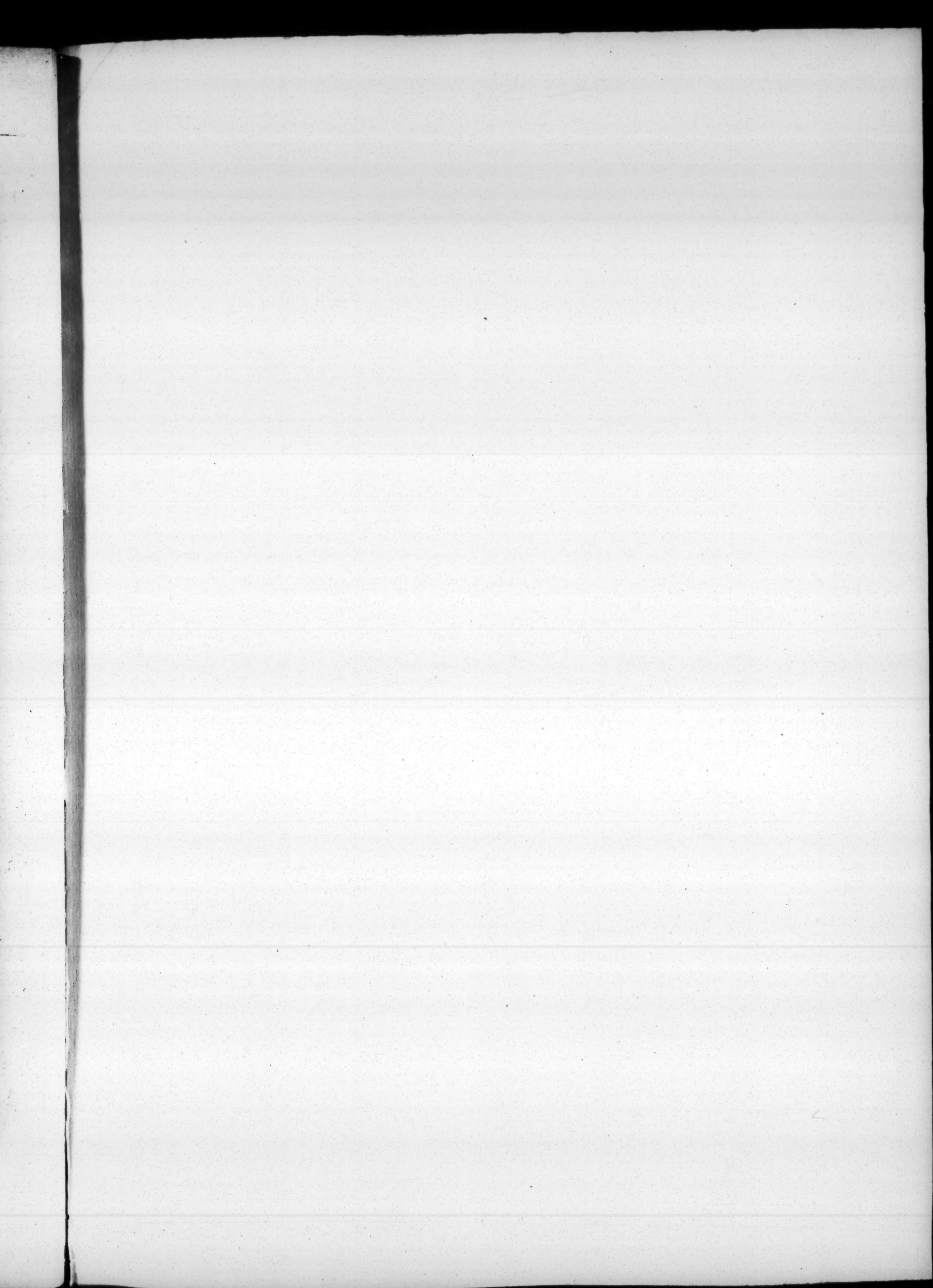
THE EDITOR.

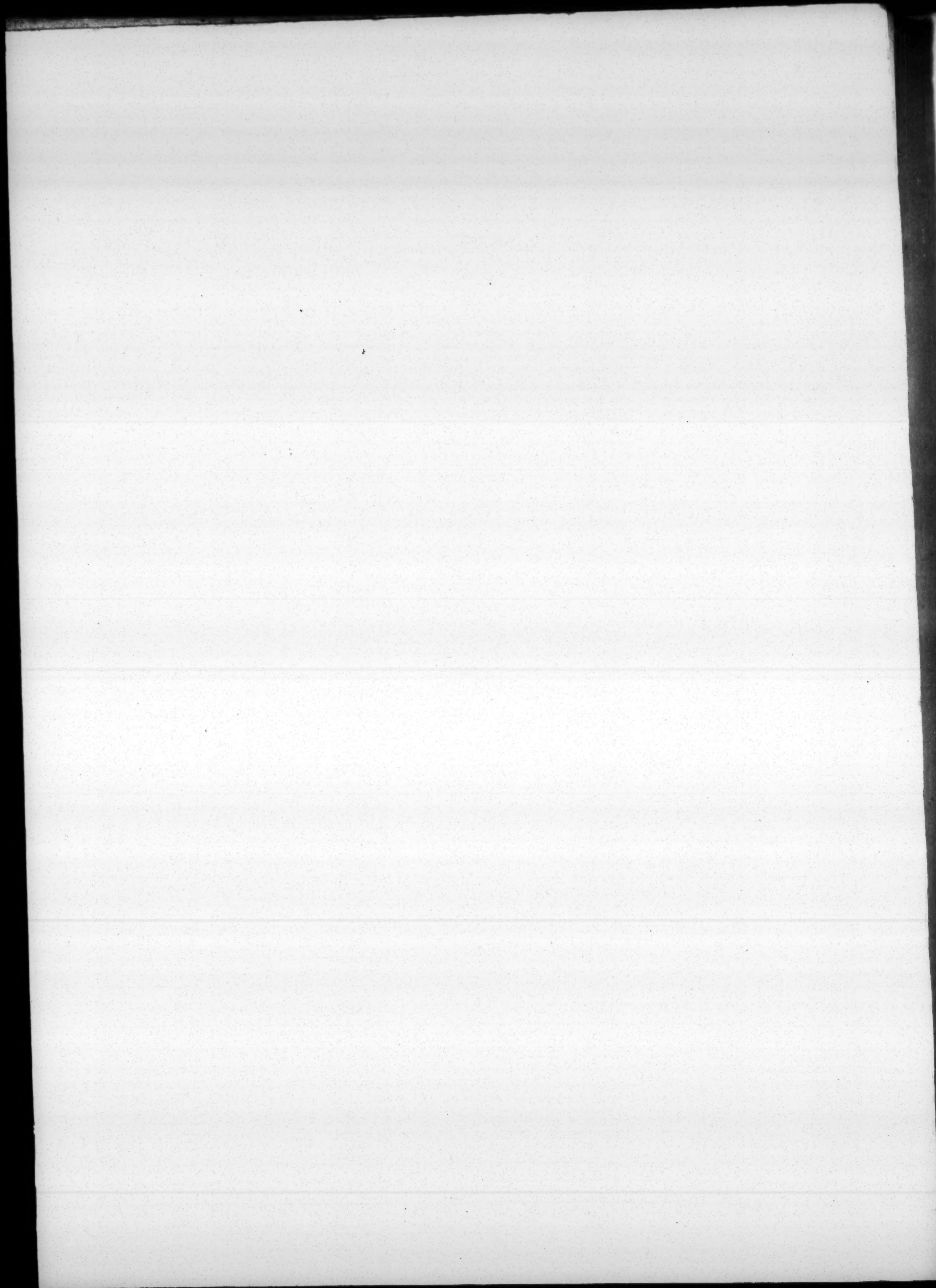






J. Miller Sculp.





S O M E
A C C O U N T

O F T H E L A T E

P E T E R C O L L I N S O N ,

FELLOW of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and of the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES,
in LONDON,

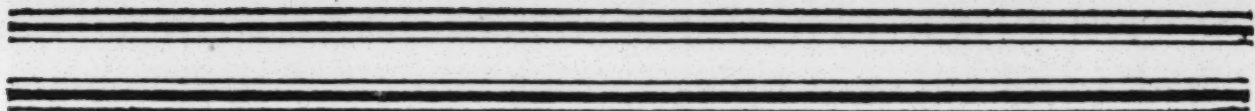
And of the ROYAL SOCIETY of BERLIN and UPSAL.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED IN THE YEAR
MDCCCLXX.

IT is imagined an obvious and essential difference will be perceived in the composition of this Letter from the antecedent one, exclusive of extensive alteration in respect both to *omission* and *addition*, which, it is presumed, has rendered the whole of it less exceptionable.





To * * * *

I KNOW not, my dear friend, that I ever wished for leisure, and the talent of Biography more than at present: I could employ both these in a manner that would be pleasing to myself, and perhaps at the same time useful to the public, in placing before it an example worthy of being recorded, because highly worthy of imitation. The satisfaction arising from the view of a life continually employed in commendable pursuits, and in acts of lasting and extensive utility, is not a small one; we participate afresh in every social action of the friend, whom we loved whilst living, and pay that tribute to his name which love and friendship demand---a grateful and honourable remembrance.

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The just esteem which my honoured friend Peter Collinson had acquired, not only among the chief promoters of natural history, in most parts of the world where these studies are cultivated, but amongst men of understanding in general in every part of useful science, will, I persuade myself, render any apology unnecessary for attempting to exhibit some account of the life of this very eminent person.

Our acquaintance commenced about the year 1740; he was then considered amongst the number of those who were best acquainted with botany and natural history in England; his collection in most branches of natural history was very large, and the specimens well chosen; his botanic garden contained many curious plants, not at that time to be met with in any other; and the number of such kept increasing to the last period of his life.

I owe much of my intimacy with the several branches of natural history to my deceased friend: scarcely any thing gave him more pleasure, than to promote an inclination for such studies, so far as was consistent with his acquaintances situation; for being in business himself, he knew the value of time too well, to endeavour to excite a taste for such researches, where probably it must have been gratified at the expence of discretion, and of those hours which ought to have been devoted to more necessary employment.

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The family of the Collinsons is of ancient standing in the North : Peter and James were the great grandsons of Peter Collinson, who lived on his paternal estate, called Hugal Hall, or Height of Hugal, near Windermere Lake, in the parish of Stavely, about ten miles from Kendal in Westmorland. My friend, whilst a youth, discovered his attachment to natural history : insects, and their several metamorphoses, employed many of those hours, which, at his time of life are mostly spent by others in very different pursuits. Plants likewise engaged his attention ; he began early to make a collection of dried specimens, and had access to the best gardens at that time in the neighbourhood of London.

It was a favourable circumstance to himself, that he was in partnership with his brother James Collinson, in a business that did not always require their presence together. They lived in great harmony, and reciprocally afforded to each other opportunities for their respective pursuits. Both, however, had a strong relish for horticulture and planting, and both had acquired a just conception of rural elegance.

He became early acquainted with the first-rate naturalists of that age ; the Drs. Derham, Woodward, Dale, Lloyd, and, to name all in one, the great Sir Hans Sloane, were amongst his friends. I first saw that amazing collection, now constituting the British Museum, with my deceased Friend, in company with the late Sir Charles Wager, who
had

had been a most generous and fortunate contributor to that vast treasure of natural curiosities ; omitting nothing, in the course of his many voyages, that could add to its magnificence, and encouraging the commanders under him, who were stationed in different parts of the globe, to procure whatever was rare and valuable in every branch of natural history. To this he was strongly excited by Peter Collinson ; for whom and his family Sir Charles had a very singular esteem, and continued it to the last moments of his life.

Among the great variety of articles which from that superb collection, small was the number of those with whose history my Friend was not well acquainted ; he being one of those few who visited Sir Hans at all times familiarly, and continued so to do to the latest period ; their inclinations and pursuits in respect to natural history being the same, a firm friendship had early been established between them.

Peter Collinson was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on the 12th of December, 1728 ; and perhaps was one of the most diligent and useful members of that respectable body, not only in supplying them with many curious observations himself, but in promoting and preserving a most extensive correspondence with learned and ingenious foreigners, in all countries, and on every useful subject ; so that he not only furnished many instructive hints from his own fund of observa-

observations, but excited others to contribute largely to the instruction and entertainment of the Society.

Besides his attention to natural history, he suffered nothing useful, in either art or science, to escape him ; he minuted every striking hint that occurred either in reading or conversation ; and from this source he derived much information, as there were very few men of learning and ingenuity of all professions, who were not of his acquaintance at home, and most foreigners of eminence in natural history, or in arts and sciences, were recommended to his notice and friendship.

His diligence and œconomy of time, was such, that though he never appeared to be in a hurry, he maintained an extensive correspondence with great punctuality ; acquainting the learned and ingenious in distant parts of the globe, with the discoveries and improvements in natural history in this country, and receiving the like information from the most eminent persons in almost every other. Among a variety of circumstances of this kind, that might be mentioned, his correspondences with the ingenious Cadwallader Colden, Esq; of New-York, and the justly celebrated Dr. Franklin of Philadelphia, furnish instances of the benefit resulting from his attention to all improvements. From the former of these gentlemen many valuable observations were received ; and the latter communicated his first essays on electricity to my

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Friend,

Freind, in a series of letters, which were then published, and have been printed in a late edition of the Doctor's ingenious discoveries and improvements. Their minds in this respect were congenial, ever intent upon promoting public good; the letter subjoined is a proof of it *.

Perhaps,

* TO MICHAEL COLLINSON, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

Craven-street, Feb. 8, 1770.

UNDERSTANDING that an account of our dear departed Friend Mr. Peter Collinson is intended to be given to the public, I cannot omit expressing my approbation of the design, as the characters of good men are exemplary, and often stimulate the well-disposed to an imitation, beneficial to mankind, and honourable to themselves. And as you may be unacquainted with the following instances of his zeal and usefulness in promoting knowledge, which fell within my observation, I take the liberty of informing you, that in 1730, a Subscription Library being set on foot at Philadelphia, he encouraged the design by making several very valuable presents to it, and procuring others from his friends: and as the Library Company had a considerable sum arising annually, to be laid out in books, and needed a judicious friend in London to transact the business for them, he voluntarily and cheerfully undertook that service, and executed it for more than thirty years successively; assisting in the choice of books, and taking the whole care of collecting and shipping them, without ever charging or accepting any consideration for his trouble. The success of this library (greatly owing to his kind countenance and good advice) encouraged the erecting others in different places on the same plan; and it is supposed there are now upwards of thirty subsisting in the several colonies, which have contributed greatly to the spreading of useful knowledge in that part of the world; the books he recommended being all of that kind, and the catalogue of this first library being much respected and followed by those libraries that succeeded.

During the same time he transmitted to the directors of the library the earliest accounts of every new European improvement in agriculture and the arts, and
every

Perhaps, in some future period, the account he procured of the management of sheep in Spain, in respect to their migrations from the mountains to the plains, and their stated returns, published in the Gentleman's Magazine for May and June, 1764, may not be considered among the least of the benefits accruing from his extensive and inquisitive correspondence. When America is better peopled, the mountainous parts more habitable, the plains unloaded of their vast forests, and cultivated, the finest sheep in the world may possibly cover the plains of Carolina, Georgia, and the Florida's in the winter months, and retreat to the mountains

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every philosophical discovery : among which, in 1745, he sent over an account of the new German Experiments in Electricity, together with a glass tube, and some directions for using it, so as to repeat those experiments. This was the first notice I had of that curious subject, which I afterwards prosecuted with some diligence, being encouraged by the friendly reception he gave to the letters I wrote to him upon it. Please to accept this small testimony of mine to his memory, for which I shall ever have the utmost respect; and believe me, with sincere esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN*.

* At the original publication of this "Letter" Dr. Franklin was not considered as a man inimical to the interests of Great-Britain; otherwise his name had either been wholly omitted; or not introduced in the same line of distinction with that of the late Cadwallader Colden, Esq; a gentleman whose political principles were the reverse of Dr. Franklin's.

as the summer heats increase, and dry up the herbage. We are utter strangers to this kind of œconomy. Probably it might be practised even in this island to advantage, with this difference, that the highest ground should be chosen for the winter residence of these animals, proper shelter being made for them, and the wetter low lands left for summer.

Views of public benefit to this country, to others, to mankind in general, always suggested to him useful enquiries ; and the public are in possession of many valuable hints, which, from time to time, he communicated through the channel of the Gentleman's Magazine, and daily papers, sometimes with his name, or initials, but oftener without any signature ; being more solicitous to do good, than to be seen in doing it.

His conversation was cheerful, and usefully entertaining, because it was generally turned to some interesting disquisition, or imparting some beneficial information. This rendered his acquaintance much desired by those who had a relish for natural history, or were studious in cultivating rural improvements, and secured him the intimate friendship of some of the most eminent personages in this kingdom, as distinguished by their taste in planting and horticulture, as by their rank and dignity. With some of these he frequently spent a few days at their seats in the neighbourhood of London, imparting many advantageous hints
with

with regard to the improvements they were designing : and indeed many of them were sensible very few were either so able to advise in these respects, or so impartial. Frequent opportunities had furnished extensive observation and experience of the effects of different methods of cultivation ; what soil, what aspect, best suited different plants and trees ; how best to cover incurable defects, how to improve beauties ; and from this general knowledge, derived from repeated remarks, he often prevented young planters from committing capital mistakes, rectified others, into which they had been misled by the ignorant and designing, and by such means, he prevailed upon many of his friends not only to embark in this rational amusement, but to persevere in it, greatly to their own emolument, and the lasting advantage of their country.

A very frequent observation of my Friend's, was, that he thought it a matter of the utmost importance to young people of fortune, that they should be as early as possible initiated into some rational pursuit, and especially into a taste for all kinds of rural improvements. The human mind, he would remark, must have some object in view, some amusements are necessary ; and if virtue and propriety do not engage it, vice and folly will. Let us then turn them to an employ, which at once contributes to their health, their pleasure, and their profit, and secures them from falling into

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idleness, or dissipation, merely for want of better engagements ; let us find them something to do ; and they cannot be unhappy, like a multitude of young persons, who are dissipated and corrupt, because, perhaps, those who have been early about them, or were concerned in their education, had not the inclination or address to lead them into some innocent, pleasurable, and useful pursuit.

Planting, he used to say, and gardening, supply a fund of entertainment, the most lasting and reasonable of any occupation in this life ; pleasures not to be purchased. The trees which we ourselves have planted, the fruits we have raised, the plants we have cultivated, seem to be like our children, a kind of new creation ; their shade, their taste, their fragrance, and their beauties, affect us with a richer repast than any others. What a pleasing scene, would he observe, lies open to a young man of fortune devoted to such amusements ! Each succeeding year produces new shades, other fruits, fresh beauties, and brings besides most certain profit. To behold the rising groves, barrenness made fertile, our country improved, ourselves made useful and happy, and posterity enriched ! When, on this favourite subject, a very natural reflection often escaped him, That he seldom knew a man possessed of a taste for such pleasures, who was not at the same time temperate and virtuous. And indeed he had a right to make the observation ; for he had
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the satisfaction of reckoning among his most intimate friends, men of the most amiable, and unblemished characters in all stations, parties, and distinctions.

Nor was he only employed in promoting this taste amongst his friends, in enlarging their views, correcting and refining their judgment, but also in furnishing them with the means of increasing their plantations; and it is but doing justice to his memory, to mention that he was the first who introduced the great variety of seeds and shrubs, which are now the principal ornaments of every garden; and that it was owing to his indefatigable industry, that so many persons of the first distinction are now enabled to behold groves transplanted from the Western continent flourishing so luxuriantly in their several domains, as if they were already become indigenous to Britain.

His business in the mercantile way was chiefly to North America and the West-Indies; the former particularly. He had perused every performance that was wrote respecting the natural history and produce of all our own settlements, and indeed of all the European colonies in the New World. This enabled him to make enquiries after every thing that was curious and useful, and brought him acquainted with the most intelligent people who came over from America; his enquiries raised some curiosity in those countries, and excited

cited a taste for natural history, and botanical researches. It perhaps may safely be said, that every thing of this sort that has appeared in those parts of the world, was chiefly owing to his encouragement. That eminent naturalist John Bartram may almost be said to have been created such by my Friend's assistance; he first recommended the collecting of seeds, and afterwards assisted in disposing of them in this country, and constantly excited him to persevere in investigating the plants of America, which he has executed with indefatigable labour through a long course of years, and with amazing success.

The quantities of new seeds he received from America, not only supplied his own garden with every thing that was curious, but furnished him with the means of procuring others, in exchange, from other parts of the globe. He had some correspondents in almost every nation in Europe; some in Asia, and even at Peking; who all transmitted to him the most valuable seeds they could collect, in return for the treasures of America. In this exchange of good offices, there is abundant cause to believe no man ever exceeded him in respect to punctuality, care, or generosity; few had ever more intelligent correspondents, or succeeded better in enriching this country with the vegetable produce of every other, that could either add to its advantage or ornament. And were I to assert, that he was the means of introducing more new and
 beauti-

beautiful plants into Britain than any man of his time, and was inferior to none in his acquaintance with the history of their introduction, I should run little hazard of transgressing the bounds of veracity.

Many anecdotes of this kind he had learned from the ancient botanists, who flourished at his entrance into these studies; and many observations he had likewise made in the course of above half a century. Were such of the former of these as he noted in most of the books of natural history which he left behind him, collected, and the many curious remarks he made on a variety of improving and entertaining subjects, digested and laid before the public, a richer treasure of valuable knowledge can scarcely be offered to it, especially if judicious extracts were added, from the letters of his correspondents.

The great Linnæus, at the time of his residence in England, contracted an intimate friendship with Peter Collinson; which was reciprocally increased by a multitude of good offices, and continued to the last without any diminution.

It was not, however, to Britain only, that his benevolent views were confined; as he took much pains to excite a taste in the Americans for natural history, so he likewise
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often prompted them to pursue improvements, alike beneficial to themselves and to their mother country. How often have I heard him urge to such of them as visited him, the benefit, nay necessity, of cultivating flax, hemp, wine, silk, and other products? He would press the Virginians to bethink themselves in time of a more permanent staple, than a plant whose consumption only depends on custom and caprice, and this custom daily declining. Vines, said he, will thrive well in your country; but imitate nature in their cultivation; don't keep them close to the ground, as we are forced to do in this and other Northern European climates, for the sake of a little more sun and heat to ripen the grape; your summer heats exceed, as much as ours fall short; allow them, therefore, longer stems, let them be trained to, and supported by trees, and hide their fruit among the foliage as in the warmer parts of Europe.

We frequently lamented the supineness and inattention of the colonists to their interest in this, as well as many other articles. In most of the Northern and Southern colonies, there are a variety of native grapes, growing wild in the woods, and twining among the trees and bushes for their support; these yield fruit in plenty of different kinds, and many of them capable of producing a rich good wine; how easy would it be in autumn to collect a sufficient quantity of the fruit to make trial of the wine? It has been done by a
very

very few, and with success; the fault seems not so much in the fruit, as want of skill or care in making the wine. I have tasted some very good wine from the wild uncultivated grape, made without much skill, and sent over to England; what would not the same fruit with proper skill and management have produced? It is certainly high time for the Americans to apply themselves with a little more diligence to cultivate their native produce. No person perhaps was more intently solicitous than my Friend, to promote these useful essays, as no person was better acquainted with the natural produce of America; none saw the benefits that might result from them more clearly, nor could suggest more compendious and unexpensive means of procuring them.

Besides his attachment to natural history, he was very conversant in the antiquities of our own country; many curious remarks, as well as some antient British curiosities, are in the possession of his son. Few persons were better acquainted with the progress of arts, sciences, and manufactures, or improvements of any kind, amongst us, than himself. The antient state, and its gradual advances to the present, was a frequent topic of his enquiry and conversation.

He was a member of the Society of Antiquarians from its
first

first institution, and supplied them often with many curious articles of intelligence and observations, respecting both our own and other countries; for wherever he was, or however seemingly engaged, nothing at any time escaped his notice, if it appeared likely to be useful or instructive. Why he was not elected one of the curators of the British Museum, was matter of wonder to many of his acquaintance. He was one of the founder's most antient and intimate Friends, a contributor to this collection, acquainted with the subjects, and had done more towards promoting researches into natural history than perhaps most of his contemporaries: but he had no greater ambition than to collect what knowledge he could, and to render this knowledge subservient as much as possible to the good of mankind.

He lived many years in great domestic happiness; his family took the same bias, and aided his pursuits. Like his own, it was also their amusement; and being accustomed to the conversation of men acquainted with such subjects, they acquired both knowledge and an attachment to the study of nature.

His person was rather short than tall; he had a pleasing and social aspect; of a temper open and communicative, capable of feeling for distress, and ready to relieve and sympathise.

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He rose very early, and whilst in the country his time was almost continually employed in his garden, observing and assisting the operations of nature, or in the study of other parts of physical knowledge, which contributed to his health and his pleasure.

He was fond of fruit to an extreme, and of flowers a perpetual admirer: he was seldom without them in his house, from the early Snowdrop to the autumn Cyclamen. He would often relate with pleasure the astonishing advancement made in his time in horticulture; gave instances of many plants, which at their first introduction would not bear our winters without shelter, and now endured almost our hardest frosts; so that foreigners stood amazed at the power of vegetation in this country, and the happy temperature we enjoy, notwithstanding the unmerited murmurs of the unthinking and injudicious against a climate the most favourable of all others to the real happiness of mankind.

Excepting some attacks of the gout, in general he enjoyed perfect health and great equality of spirits; bearing those trials which are incident to man with fortitude and resignation.

In such a course he arrived at his 75th year; when being
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on a visit to Lord Petre in Essex, for whom he had a singular regard, he was seized with a total suppression of urine, which baffling every attempt to relieve it, proved fatal on the 11th of August, 1768, and deprived his family, his friends, and country of a man devoted to their interest and advantage. Inclosed in his will was found a paper, importing, " that he hoped he should leave behind him a Good Name, " which he valued more than riches ; that he had endeavoured not to live uselessly ; and that all his days he constantly aimed to be a Friend to Mankind." Such indeed he was, to the utmost of his ability ; and he may justly be considered as a latent spring to many important improvements, as well as one of the principal promoters of natural history in general, and of horticulture in particular, in the age in which he lived.

He has left behind him, besides many curious anecdotes relative to the state of botany, planting, and horticulture in this country, a vast treasure of dried specimens of plants ; and in spite of repeated and most cruel depredations made upon his garden, whereby he lost a multitude of valuable and curious plants and shrubs, and had besides very many others destroyed by the villains in the act of plunder, he nevertheless left a small treasure of rare plants in greater perfection perhaps than can be seen in any other spot.

Tha'

That which I am now, though feebly, attempting to do for him, he often executed for his friends, rescued their names from oblivion, and proposed their virtues to be copied by succeeding generations. The late Dr. Stukely was one; and many others might be mentioned, who have received from his friendly hand the tribute due to their memories.

His friendships were not superficial; he could not see a worthy character drop unheeded into the grave without a wish, nay an endeavour, to perpetuate its remembrance. For my own part, I yet feel that in him I have lost a friend who valued my happiness little less than his own, and sincerely wish it was in my power to do justice to his memory. Till, however, some person of greater ability and more leisure undertakes the task, I believe his friends will not be dissatisfied with perusing this account of his conduct and conversation.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 7, Note, Line 5, for eternize, read, perpetuate.

29, Note, Line 6, for the few preceding particulars, read, the preceding instances of meanness.



